

DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION

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MEETING SUMMARY

Delta Emergency Response and Preparedness Summit

June 26, 2006

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

The Isleton Conference Center
203 Second Street
Isleton, California 95641

PURPOSE OF THE SUMMIT: Convene Delta leaders and emergency preparedness specialists to begin cross-jurisdictional planning for social/physical impacts associated with a catastrophic Delta disaster.

1. Presentations: Bringing it Close to Home:
 - Images of Katrina – The Human Side of Disaster (15-minute power point)
 - Delta Warning (16-minute video)

Participants watched and discussed media presentations about the California Conservation Corps' (CCC) role in post Katrina and Pakistan emergency response efforts. Jose Phillips of the CCC spoke about the challenges of overcoming cross-jurisdictional and cross-geographic barriers. He further discussed the need for emergency responders to have adequate contingency planning conducted and tested to accommodate inevitable constraints during their response activities. He discussed the need for counseling and other support networks to help response staff process their emotions and experiences in a psychologically healthy way. He also pointed out the difference in the way American and East Asian cultures responded to large-scale disasters (i.e. Gulf Coast Katrina victims versus Pakistan Earthquake victims) and how East Asian citizens had a significantly lower expectation of assumed governmental support than Gulf Coast residents.

The Delta Warning video was shown in entirety and provided the group with compelling images and scenarios about current and future flooding risks to the Delta, its inhabitants, and the surrounding regions (e.g. Sacramento, Stockton, East Bay, Bay Area)

2. Sharing Our Experiences as Local Leaders

Several elected representatives addressed their experiences and concerns about flood and catastrophic disaster risks to the Delta. They stressed a key role of elected individuals as being able to protect and serve the constituents, even in the face of inherent uncertainties about when, where, and how big a disaster might be. Some speakers (Mayor Fargo) also addressed steps their jurisdictions have taken to support better community awareness of disaster preparedness. Several speakers spoke of the role that elected officials play as conduit between the public (and their inherent

needs) and emergency staff (and their inherent constraints). Lastly, several speakers discussed the need for the public to be more individually prepared for a disaster and the infeasibility (due to resource constraints) of local jurisdictions to provide all support to citizens during the first 72 hours of a crisis.

3. Emergency Response and Preparedness – State of the Delta (OES Panel Discussion)

Adam Sutkus of the Center for Collaborative Policy reviewed the results of several interviews he conducted with emergency response and preparedness specialists from the five Delta counties. Several key themes emerged that characterized the Delta as an area poised to benefit from a comprehensive and coordinated approach towards emergency management:

- Regionalism: the unique needs of coordinating emergencies in the Delta region are not easily addressed within traditional jurisdictional lines.
- Past successes prepares the Delta for current challenges: All counties and cities have been doing excellent work individually; together they can accomplish complex challenges in a united fashion that leverages efforts beyond isolated projects, maximizing economies of scale.
- SEMS is benchmark, but unique needs go beyond existing process: the Standardized Emergency Management System provides the ongoing bedrock of local and statewide response; however, the nuances of planning and responding in the Delta require innovative thinking to address.
- Education of the citizenry: critical street-level education has been diminished due to efforts and limited resources being shifted to other pressing matters.
- Collaboration is critical: Hurricane Katrina, and other such events has shown us that traditional response systems in a catastrophic event can become overwhelmed—and we must think creatively and supportively to effectively confront these challenges.
- 'Flood fighting' is important; however, this is one part of a multi-faceted regional challenge. Whether it is evacuation coordination, communicating, or dealing with mass care & shelter, when looking at the Delta as a single, unique area—the need to think differently is clear.

Additionally, several specific topics emerged as key challenges for the emergency management community, whether flood-based or originating through another crisis such as a flu pandemic or earthquake, including: critical transportation planning during events; loss of power and utilities; addressing mass fatality issues; coordinating large scale evacuation; managing the requirements of the special needs population (languages, aging, mental/physical disability); mass care and shelter issues; limited radio and public warning communications; among others.

The collective vision of the future as seen through the professional eyes of the emergency management community is a Delta area that benefits from seamless coordination for response needs unhindered by geographic or jurisdictional lines; an educated and informed population ready to help themselves as well as to support their community; coordinated management of flood fight crews, supplies and equipment in the Delta through a real-time, shared logistics system; and enhanced operability of communications systems during and event that allows for fluid interaction and response coordination.

4. Meeting the Delta Challenge – A Cross-Jurisdictional Approach

Several participants engaged in this discussion. A number of participants expressed support of a cross-jurisdictional approach to addressing Delta-wide risk scenarios and they see a valuable role that local entities (such as ports) and local governments can play coordinating resources during a crisis. However, there was a range of perspectives on what that might mean. There appears to be a

compelling question over terms like “regional” and “regionalism” and how that is manifested in a Delta risk planning approach. Participants seem eager to strike a balance between cooperating and coordinating across boundaries but not to do so at the expense of local authorities / autonomies. This is also the case between local and state entities. That said, a number of participants believe they can make use of the collective strength of a multi-jurisdiction, partnered approach to access and maximize State and Federal involvement / resources during a disaster and that such a partnership can open doors that an individual jurisdiction might not be able to open. It was also discussed that timing is of the essence, and appropriate, given recent attention on the Delta and the potential for funding opportunities.

Discussion also focused on the responsibilities elected officials have to their respective jurisdictions and how their potential decisions to participate in a regional planning approach is commensurate to how it serves their unique interests. Several participants stated that in order for them to be further involved and advocate future efforts by themselves or their staff, there needs to be a compelling “story” told about why a Delta risk planning approach is important and in the collective best interest of all Delta citizens / jurisdictions. The importance of educating the public regarding Delta emergency preparedness and response was also emphasized.

5. Desired Outcomes/Next Steps

In response to the full group discussion, the Center for Collaborative Policy facilitation team provided a summary of the discussion and a suggestion of next steps. In response to these proposed next steps, Linda Fiack and Mike McGowan (respectively the Executive Director and Chairman) of the Delta Protection Commission committed to conduct the following tasks:

- Conduct follow up to with elected participants of the Summit to arrange a presentation for their respective governing bodies. The focus of each presentation will be a statement of compelling need for regional cooperation / coordination on emergency response, a summary of Summit results, and a proposal for next steps in this emerging planning effort.*
- Prepare draft versions of a Letter of Coordination, institutionalizing jurisdictions’ intents to conduct joint work efforts to pursue common benefits, and a Resolution of Support stating each jurisdictions’ support for regional emergency planning efforts and funding, and their support to convene a regional body of leaders on a regular basis to continue these discussions.*
- Work with regional emergency response specialists to identify and pursue funding opportunities and priorities in support of a Delta region emergency preparedness plan, taking into consideration the essence of timing and funding periods.*
- Work with regional emergency response leaders to develop an appropriate set of Delta-wide training exercise scenarios and associated cost estimates for future joint consideration and implementation by Delta jurisdictions.*

Chairman McGowan closed the meeting by thanking all participants for their valuable time and the following organizations for their funding contributions in making the Summit a reality: The Dutra Group, Kjeldsen, Sinnock & Neudeck, Inc., MBK Engineers, and Wood Rodgers, Inc.

Elected Officials Delta Emergency Summit

June 26, 2006

Participants

Mike McGowan, Supervisor, Yolo County

Christopher Cabaldon, Mayor, City of West Sacramento

Heather Fargo, Mayor, City of Sacramento

Eddie Woodruff, Mayor, City of Rio Vista

Kevin Romick, Vice Mayor, City of Oakley

Randy Shelton, Vice Mayor, City of Galt

Shane Diller, Chief of Police, City of Isleton

Lieutenant Robert Moreno, San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office

Arne Simonsen, Association of Bay Area Governments

Fabrizio Sasso, Mayor's Office, City of Stockton

Ted Wolter, Chief of Staff, Supervisor Roberta MacGlashan, County of Sacramento

Pat Braziel, Chief of Staff, Supervisor Don Nottoli, County of Sacramento

Roberta Goulart, Contra Costa County

Douglas Gault, City of Elk Grove, Public Works

Dave Brent, City of Sacramento

Ron Baldwin, San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services

Marci Coglianese, Former Mayor, City of Rio Vista

Dave Ceppos, Center for Collaborative Policy

Linda Fiack, Delta Protection Commission

Ray Groom, Yolo County Office of Emergency Services

Rick Martinez, Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services

Dan McCanta, Yolo County Office of Emergency Services

Bob Powell, Solano County Office of Emergency Services

Jose Phillips, California Conservation Corps.

Sheila Singleton, Delta Protection Commission

Adam Sutkus, Center for Collaborative Policy